Second Hand Guitar Inspection Card

Page 1: check in this order. Expensive problems come first, so you can stop early. Tick what you find and note which column it falls in.

Guitar and model	Seller (name on profile)	Asking price	Date and place

1. Inspection, in order

#	Check	Simple fix	Workshop job (get a quote)	Walk away	Found	Notes
1	Neck: sight along it; truss rod turns?	High action that adjusts out		Rod stuck, stripped or maxed; twisted neck		
2	Frets: grooves, sharp ends, buzz on every fret	Buzz that clears with relief	Sharp ends; deep grooves (level or refret)			
3	Nut and headstock: open strings, cracks, glue lines		Badly cut nut	Headstock crack or old break		
4	Acoustic bridge and top: paper test, bulge, saddle height		Slight bridge lift; small top crack	Bulge with no saddle left		
5	Body and neck joint: cracks inside and out, gaps		Small body crack	Crack at the neck joint		
6	Electronics: every pickup, knob and the jack	Crackly knob or jack	Dead pickup or switch position			
7	Tuners: smooth, holds tune after playing	Slipping tuner; missing knobs or screws				
8	Serial and history: photo, receipt, story			Serial removed; story changes		
9	Play it: comfortable once a setup is allowed for?	Old strings, dirty board		Still wrong for you		

2. Decision

Result	What it means	Tick
Only simple fixes	Good sign. Budget for strings and a setup.	
One or more workshop jobs	Get a repairer's quote before you pay. Use the price sum on page 2.	
Any walk away item	Walk away, unless a repairer has checked it and the price reflects a major repair.	

3. Kit to bring

Tuner app and phone torch. For electrics: your own lead and a small amp or headphone amp. A strip of paper for the bridge test. A friend who plays. This card.

Our guide, not a repairer's assessment. Repair prices vary between workshops, so always ask for a quote. Top End tip: sharp fret ends often show up on guitars kept in dry air con; lifting bridges on guitars kept somewhere humid.

Seller, Scam and Price Check

Page 2: who you are buying from, Scamwatch warning signs, and whether the price still works.

4. Private seller or business? (ACCC)

	Private seller (not a business)	Business or dealer, including on marketplaces
Guarantees	Only title, undisturbed possession, and no hidden debts or charges	All consumer guarantees, including acceptable quality and matching the description
If faulty	No general right to a refund, repair or replacement for quality	Right to a remedy: refund, repair or replacement
How to tell	Ask: are you operating as a business?	Clues: Pty Ltd or business name, ABN, many listings or reviews, office or sales contact

Business? (ask)	Receipt or history	Repairs or mods disclosed	Listing screenshot saved	Defects written on receipt (dealer)

5. Scam check (based on Scamwatch advice)

Warning sign: stop if you tick any	Tick	Safe habit	Tick
Wants payment or a deposit before you inspect		Inspected in person before paying	
Unusual payment: money order, preloaded card, several PayIDs or accounts		Using the platform's recommended payment	
Account or PayID name does not match the seller		Chat kept on the platform	
Unbelievably low price		Payee name checked against the seller	
Travelling seller, someone else will deliver		Meeting in daylight, with a friend (our tip)	

If it goes wrong: contact your bank or card provider immediately, then report it at scamwatch.gov.au. IDCARE (1800 595 160) offers free help if your personal details were exposed. Many payments are instant, and Scamwatch warns you are unlikely to get the money back.

6. Price sum

Item	Amount ($)
A. Asking price (or your offer)	
B. Strings and a setup (quote)	
C. Workshop jobs (quotes)	
D. Total: A plus B plus C	
E. Similar guitar in good condition (from listings)	
Buy only if D is comfortably below E	Yes / No

General information, not legal advice. Sources: ACCC Consumer rights and guarantees; ACCC Product Safety, Buy safe second hand products online; Scamwatch, Buying and selling scams. Checked 16 November 2026.